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Wingin' It!



JD HOVLAND SPENT HIS WINTER EATING ALMOST EVERY BASKET OF WINGS
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FAVORITE MUSIC ARTIST / GROUP: Usher. I saw him at the State Fair last year and cried.

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WHAT'S THE WORST DATE YOU EVER WITNESSED: A guy came in with a girl he met online and her cousin was here as well. Turns out the guy had met the cousin online also and had gone on a date the night before. They chewed him out and ended up staying here to drink and talk about him.

STRANGEST DRINK REQUEST: Apple schnapps on the rocks

BEST HANGOVER CURE: Our bloody mary

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OF THE WEEK

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COPY CHIEF Bridgette Reinsmoen
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CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Jerard Fagerberg, Jay Gabler, Tony
Libera, Michael Madden, Erica Rivera,
Sheila Regan
CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS
Galen Fletcher, Alma Guzman,
Lucy Hawthorne, E. Katie Holm,
Shelly Mosman, Tony Nelson,
Colin Michael Simmons

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ART DIRECTOR Emily Utne
LAYOUT EDITOR Holly Hilgenberg

Production
DESIGN MANAGER Dana Holmay
GRAPHIC DESIGNER Jackie Kilmer

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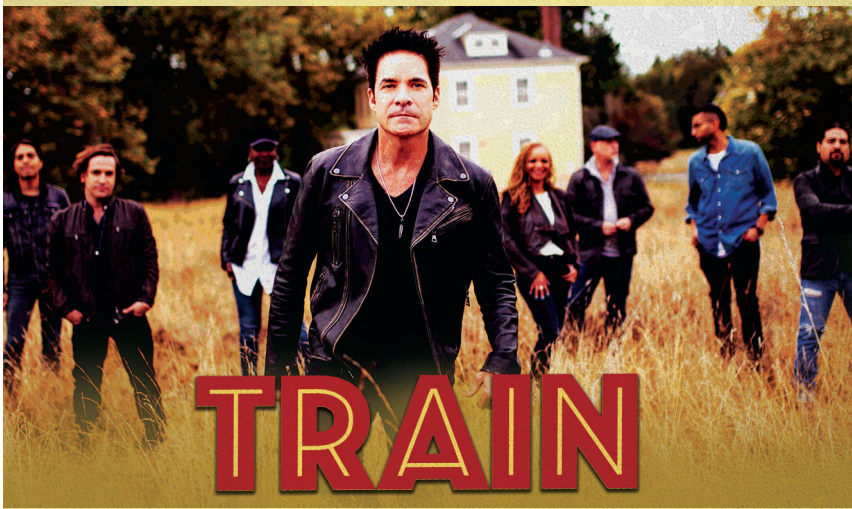
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STAFF ACCOUNTANT Du Nguyen Ho

City Pages
800 1st St. N., Ste. 300, Minneapolis, MN 55401
PHONE 612.375.1015 FAX 612.372.3737
E-MAIL adinfo@citypages.com
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THE SHORTLIST



Planned Parenthood protest: Supporters vs. haters at St. Anthony Park clinic
citypages.com/slideshows

SUSAN DU

THE STAT SHEET

723

Number of students for every school counselor in Minnesota, one of the worst ratios in the country

4th

The Twin Cities' national ranking in solar job growth, up 3,803 new jobs

43,000

Number of new residents added to the Twin Cities metro area last year

4.4

Percentage of U.S. adults who hunt, a 40 percent decline since 1991

“She’s from a very conservative district. They’d elect the Anti-Christ if he was on the Republican ticket.”

Reader Jerry La Bathe responds to “Minnesota Rep. Mary Fransen compares March for Our Lives kids to Hitler Youth,” at citypages.com.

WOMEN TAKE FLIGHT

THE GOP’S YEARS of feeding the fears of aging white men appear to have jeopardized its future. Young women are fleeing the party in astounding numbers.

So says a large, nonpartisan study by Pew Research. Among millennials—those born between 1981 and 1996—men now favor Democrats by 8 percent, a sizeable shift left from their forefathers. Yet millennial women now back Democrats over the GOP by a remarkable 70 to 23 percent.

It remains to be seen how this seismic change will play out at the ballot box, since young people remain less likely to vote. But with Democrats also loading up on female candidates, we could be witnessing the last hurrah of the Republican Party.

POPULAR STORIES AT CITYPAGES.COM

Minnesota Rep. **MARY FRANSON** compares ‘March for Our Lives’ kids to Hitler Youth

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THE OBSTRUCTOR

Sen. Warren Limmer's human blockade of gun control in Minnesota

Someday, when historians inevitably look back through Twitter to figure out what in God's name happened during the 20-teens, Minnesota state Sen. Warren Limmer's mentions are going to tell an interesting story.

The most recent tweets about Limmer (R-Maple Grove) are about gun control. There are news updates saying Limmer will maybe-hopefully-I-don't-know hold an "informational hearing" on gun bills, such as universal background checks.

Further back: a photo of a bunch of Minnesota high-schoolers standing in Limmer's office, demanding gun legislation.

The one staring him down with his arms crossed is Joshua Groven, a senior at the School of Environmental Studies in Eagan, who led a sit-in in Limmer's office and later interrupted a Senate hearing after the students were politely turned away with assurances that gun control just didn't have the votes. They were gavelled and escorted out.

Here's why Limmer matters to a group of students who would probably rather not have spent the day with him. Limmer is the chair of the Senate Judiciary's public safety committee. When it comes to public safety—and in this case, gun control—what goes before the Senate and when and how is his call. That's why Groven and company picked him. They needed to get his attention.

But few have been able to get Limmer's attention on gun control these days. Not even his fellow legislators.

They've proposed a slew of gun bills on everything from universal background checks to bans on bump stocks and military-grade weapons. They've proposed raising the purchase age of certain weapons to 21 and allowing families or police to petition a court to temporarily take away guns from people considered dangerous.

But thus far, Limmer has refused to allow hearings on any gun control matter, defying clear public sentiment. He's not just block-

ing legislation. He's refusing to even allow the issue to be discussed. (Limmer did not respond to interview requests.)

Ninety-seven percent of Americans now support universal background checks on all gun purchases, making it perhaps the only issue the country uniformly agrees on. Moreover, 67 percent of Americans now support a nationwide assault weapons ban.

Those lopsided numbers have also been playing out right before Limmer's eyes on the steps of the Capitol in St. Paul. On March 24, 18,000 protesters at the March for Our Lives rally demanded legislators do something about gun violence. By contrast, only 1,000 people attended a pro-gun rally last weekend.

This isn't the first time Limmer has been on the wrong side of history. In 2011, he sponsored an amendment that would have defined marriage as only between a man and a woman. In 2012, voters rejected Limmer's amendment. By the following year, same sex marriage was legal in Minnesota.

Limmer's Twitter mentions ultimately read like one man clinging to his favorite spot on the beach while wave after wave threatens to pummel him away. There's little to see in that gap between holding out on gun control and holding out on same-sex marriage five years earlier.



JIM GEHRZ, STAR TRIBUNE

There are some political movements that seem impossible until they hit a certain cultural tipping point. Then they become unstoppable. The people who stand rooted to their old ideas and old opinions—the ones who still say “no” even as more and more scream “yes”—suddenly stick out like sore, obstructionist thumbs.

On the cusp of same sex marriage becoming the law of the land, that was Limmer.

Now, with gun control, it's still Limmer.
—HANNAH JONES

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The Hole Truth

KSTP's prison violence story was scary—and sloppy

William St. John, a career criminal who robbed and stole to feed a drug addiction, hated the “supermax” prison in Oak Park Heights so badly he once plotted to eat razors so an accomplice outside could help him escape during the ambulance ride. Prison guards got wise to St. John’s ruse in time to thwart it.

A couple years later, St. John was still making plans. He told staff he wanted to stay in the mental health unit. If they sent him back to solitary, locked alone in a small cell for 23 hours a day, he’d kill himself, he told his keepers.

St. John was moved to solitary the next day. Before nightfall they found his body in the showers.

The Minnesota Department of Corrections disciplined 19 corrections officers who falsified records to say they’d been “making the rounds” in the days before his suicide, as explored in a 2016 story by KSTP.

The TV station ran another story on Oak Park Heights earlier this month, only this time the prisoners played the bad guys. It’s “been pretty tough” at the prison lately, reporter Jay Kolls told the camera, with “10 assaults” committed on staffers responsible for more than 400 of the state’s “worst” prisoners.

Kolls’ source, a single anonymous guard, blamed the assaults on a cut in the maximum punishment of solitary confinement—called “the hole”—from two years to 90 days. Guards had been “forecasting” violence, the source said, and “it’s happening now.”

Is it? Those “10 assaults” Kolls mentioned stemmed from just two incidents. In one, a group of inmates jumped five corrections officers. In another, a single inmate clashed

with five more. Upsetting scenes, though hardly proof of a system-wide epidemic. There’s even less evidence to support a connection to the use of solitary confinement.

The state Department of Corrections cut the maximum solitary punishment in late 2016, shortly before the Star Tribune published a damning report on its use. In the previous decade, some 17,500 Minnesota prisoners spent time in the hole, almost 2,500 of whom had diagnosed mental health issues.

One schizophrenic told the paper he’d never heard voices in his head until long stretches in isolation. All told, he did more than nine years in solitary, a practice that a United Nations report has labeled an act of “torture.”

The stories shocked Rep. Nick Zerwas (R-Elk River), as did the fact that solitary confinement wasn’t even addressed in state law. Zerwas doesn’t dispute the department’s right to use it—especially for inmates who assault guards or each other—but thinks they should at least own it.

A bill he authored would require a prison warden to sign off on a sentence longer than 30 days, while the corrections commissioner would have to approve any longer than 60 days.

The issue has no value politically—why fight for the rights of people who can’t vote?—yet Zerwas convinced colleagues it was “a human issue, and a moral issue.” His bill passed in the House, but can’t even get a hearing in the Senate, where Sen. Warren Limmer (R-Maple Grove) chairs the public safety committee. Limmer has conceded the use of solitary does “seem a bit draconian,” and he would know: He’s a former corrections officer.

Zerwas is hopeful he can fight for at least a yearly public account of how often Minnesota prisons impose solitary and why. “We’re treating people, some with severe mental health problems, like animals,” he says. Worse, actually. Dogs at the Humane Society get let outside every couple hours.

KSTP’s sloppy but scary report does reform efforts no favors. “There’s no research showing that reducing solitary confinement causes more assaults,” says Sue Abderholden, director of the state chapter of the National Association for Mental Illness. (KSTP says only: “We stand behind our story and have no comment.”)

In recent years, Maine, North Dakota, and Texas—not bleeding-heart strongholds—have drastically reduced their use of solitary confinement. Opponents predicted an inevitably gory aftermath. It never came.

In Colorado, where new rules limit solitary sentences to 15 days, corrections commissioner Rick Raemisch says flatly: “The less you use it, the safer your facilities are, and the safer your communities are.” That last part is no idle chatter: Raemisch’s predecessor was assassinated by an inmate who spent much of his sentence in the hole.

Safety was why Minnesota constructed the Oak Park Heights prison, the state’s only supermax site, in 1982. Two decades later, a study found its creation had no measurable effect on prisoners’ assaults on guards, or each other.

Solitary punishment in our prisons peaked in the years 2010-2013, with more than 8,000 sentences imposed in 2011 alone. Those years also happened to be



Mike Mullen

dangerous ones for prison employees. A combined 48 staffers were injured in prisoner assaults from 2010-12. The next three years, as the number of solitary sentences declined, “assaults of staff causing harm” fell by more than half.

Eventually, 97 percent of all inmates get released. More than a third of Minnesota inmates let out in 2014 had spent at least some time in solitary. Once on the outside, they had “higher rates of supervision [violations], new arrests, and new convictions.”

Frequent use isn’t making anyone safer, inside prison or out. But it’s easy: a steel door solution to problems we refuse to solve. Those problems have a name, a will, and in many cases, a mental health issue that’s only getting worse with each withering moment in that little room.

Solitary was a go-to move for Soviets in the Gulag. Iran’s tyrannical theocracy uses it on political enemies. The goal isn’t to rehabilitate prisoners, but to break them. Those resisting reform, and their enablers at KSTP, should spend some time alone in a quiet room thinking about that. **EM**

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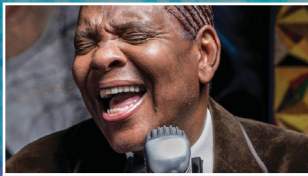
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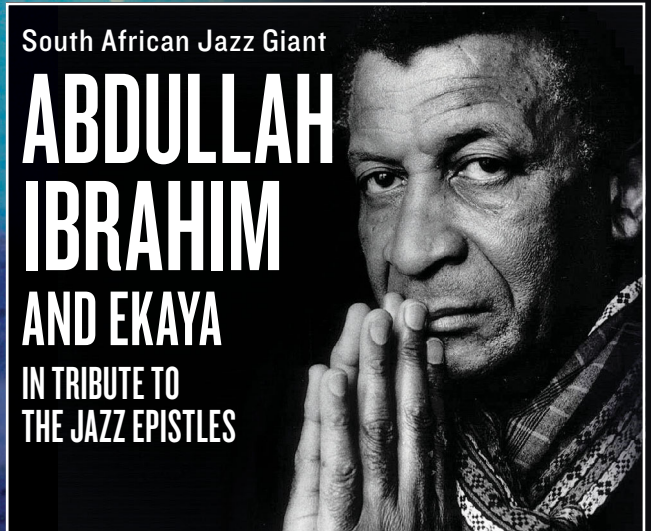
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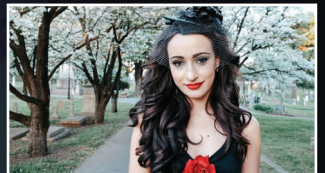
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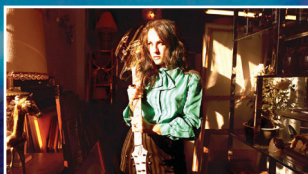
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** Warning: Hundreds of chickens were harmed in the making of this article.*

If you'd like to confuse a server right quick, a delightful way to go about it involves sitting down and busting out a scientific scale and a sheet of plasticized graph paper with tick-marks down to the millimeter at your table. Then, when you've eaten, refuse to let them remove your basket of seemingly cashed chicken wing bones.

"Oh, we're not done with those yet," my dining companion demurs, ever so politely.

JD HOVLAND AND I meet in mid-March, in the waning days of his self-appointed "Wings of Winter" project. Simply put, this was an exercise mostly consisting of eating wings at a different Twin Cities establishment every day until we were buoyed into the fresh spring air. A computer software engineer by day, Hovland has suggested a rendezvous at the Lowertown Bulldog for a couple baskets of their dry rub. The timing was fortuitous; it was just two days after they'd taken top honors at Treasure Island Casino's Wings and Brew competition. News of these accolades surprises him: "I did not know that," he chuckles coolly.

Across the table from me, Hovland maintains a reserved demeanor befitting his day job. He comes across as extraordinarily cultured. He recently traveled to Japan—ostensibly for a work conference, but just as much to sample a dish he'd read about in *Mouthfeel: How Texture Makes Taste*. He also seems to have a system for everything.

Wings of Winter entered my world when Hovland ambled into my former workplace, where he's a regular. While I ran around like a frazzled hen, he'd take a seat, book or Kindle in hand, and eventually the staff would pry out of him what he'd been up to. One day, he mentioned a nerdy project involving chicken wings... then showed me graphs and spreadsheets with just a fraction of the data on chickens he'd collected, stored in his phone.

My curiosity was piqued.

"I really like wings, but I'd never order them, because it's like, an appetizer or something," Hovland confesses. "I was like, 'I wonder what other wings I haven't had that are really good, that don't get any credit because not many people know the place has wings, or the people that go there aren't the type to vote on polls online, or nominate things.'"

A true Northerner, Hovland was also bracing for winter's shack-wackies. "The primary impetus was to avoid cabin fever. It's like, I know how to cook baked goods and stuff... I'm not an outdoor person in

≡ Wingin' It! ≡

JD Hovland spent his winter eating almost every basket of wings in the Twin Cities—for science. Here's what he learned.

BY SARAH BRUMBLE



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LUCY HAWTHORNE

the winter, but I don't like being stuck at home, either."

Thus, *Wings of Winter* became an exploration into all things wing, under the banner of a punny hat-tip to George R.R. Martin's *Winds of Winter*, that never-arriving sixth book in his *Song of Ice and Fire* series. Admittedly, Hovland modeled the rigorous, data-driven nature of his project after Christopher St. Cavish's Shanghai Soup Dumpling Index, but the subject matter ensures that's where the similarities end.

A simplified version of Wings of Winter's rules are as follows:

1. Eat wings every day, from December 1 to March 19.
2. Bone-in, or traditional Hmong/Thai/Japanese preparation only.
3. No repeats.
4. Eat the namesake sauce or rub, unless it's so hot it's trying to kill him.
5. Homemade wings must be cooked at least once each month.
6. It must be documented.

Beyond the sheer scope of this endeavor, Rule Number Six is where things get interesting. "Document" here means "photograph." Yet our Colonel Sandor Clegane arrives with a show-stopping bag of tricks at first easily mistaken for a lunchbox.

Inside:

- (1) digital scale
(set to measure in grams)
- (2) plastic takeout container
bottoms
- (1) matching lid
- (1) broken ruler

Weighing the wings at Young Joni

- (1) Ziplock bag containing:
 - (1) Tyrion Pop! Figure
 - (1) handheld battery-operated light
 - (7?) backup wet naps
- (1) notebook, with pens for analog record-keeping, lest his iPhone fail
- (1) sheet of graph paper in a plastic sleeve (markings down to the millimeter)

Keeping an empiricist's sensibility at hand—obey the rules, adhere to a structure, and keep an open mind as you see what comes out in the wash—we dove into our wings as they arrived.

Sort of.

First, Hovland photographs his wings, as plated, at several angles, including an image with Tyrion lurking in the background.

"Why Tyrion and not the Hound?"

"Well, the Hound Pop! is \$200 on eBay, and I thought \$12 for Tyrion was a much better deal."

Even this meticulous exploration of frivolities appears to have its limits—\$200 on eBay is too much for *Wings of Winter*. (Not that he didn't think about it: "The Hound would've made more sense with [his infamous line] 'I'm going to have to eat every fucking chicken in this room,'" he continues, "But Tyrion's the advisor. And I like my libations, he likes his libations....")

Next comes recording the number of wings in an order, noting "part parity" in terms of drums versus flats: "I keep track of what the part ratio is because... some people like drums, some people like flats, some people like both."

Afterward, the wings are dumped into one of those takeout containers on the





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@_WINGSOFWINTER_ INSTAGRAM

Rabbit Hole's gochu butter sauce wings (top); Monte Carlo's Beijing-style dry-rub wings

(tared) scale, to determine pre-tasting wing weight. "I take the initial weight, then I take the bone weight, and then I figure out the eaten weight and I enter it into the spreadsheet," says Hovland, making what he's doing seem as natural as the sun rising.

In other words, by subtracting one measurement from the other, we're shown how much of what we want—edible meat—we actually get. Our mortal hands are not to be trusted, and any bullshit faux-heft in the guise of bone and cartilage shall be cleaved away... by data.

Broadly considered, Wings of Winter is a compendium of one man's very specific curiosity, except he's collating it for you. For us. Thanks to Wings of Winter, depending on what we—not Hovland—value in a wing, we can find out who will best feed us, who's ripping us off, or, conversely, who's patiently waited to give us their glory, if only we'd show up and ask nicely.

Finally, we eat the Bulldog's award-winning wings. It will easily go down in history as the most considered consumption of chicken I'll experience in my lifetime.

"First thing I look at when I'm eating a wing is this triangle of skin that's on each part. You see that?" Hovland pokes at a little nubbin with his finger. "I see if that is crispy or crunchy. These are good ones. Crispy. Then, with the drum, you take a bite, check the moisture." He's pleased: "Good amount of moisture, so they haven't been sitting at temp for a long time, so the moisture hasn't migrated back into the meat, or into skin."

We met on the 101st consecutive day of Hovland's wing marathon. He'd had some practice by this point.

A horrifying thought erupts from my brain, and immediately thereafter, my mouth. "Oh my god. How many chickens do you think you, personally, have killed doing this?"

He pauses to consider. "Probably close to 250? Or at least maimed."

"They're just flightless birds now."

"Well, they were flightless to begin with."

With a quick scroll through the data he's amassed these past months, he comes up with a definitive figure: "The numbers so far are: 859.5 parts, so: 215."

"Two hundred fifteen chickens?"

"Yeah."

We both barely muster a shrug and go back to eating. These are, after all, very good wings.

THE LONGER ONE DINES with Hovland, the more one gets the sense that he experiences food and its creation through a prismatic lens of art, thermodynamics, history, and community. My mind wanders. "Maybe he has synesthesia, but of the mouth?" I think to myself, shoving a whole "flat" 90 percent of the way into my facehole.

When I come back to reality, we're chatting about the history of Buffalo wings: the Southern presence of vinegar in most Buffalo sauces around here ("The ones in Buffalo, the vinegar wasn't overpowering"), the role of exotic dancers in lemon-pepper's dissemination in Atlanta's wing culture (to which he's considering paying homage by visiting Minneapolis' King of Diamonds), and, to my shock, just how young this iconic food really is.

Buffalo wings are akin to America's Stonehenge; no one thinks about a time before their existence. But the first ones were fried up in just 1964 by Teresa Bellissimo of the Anchor Bar in Buffalo, New York—before this point, they were mostly

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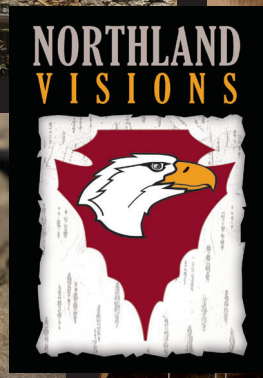
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considered scraps. (Hovland hit the spot on New Years' Eve.) Unconfirmable family legends suggest there was either a delivery error from the butcher, or that Bellissimo's drunken son came home one night begging for a snack, and the iconic dish was born.

Long story short: We know who to thank for Hooters.

But Hovland doesn't sound convinced: "You know how fried chicken—a Southern thing, poor black food—was then 'dis-

POSTSCRIPT:

After a seemingly endless winter (of wings), City Pages caught up with Hovland to see what lessons the project taught him, if any, and what the future may have in store. Here's what he had to say:

CP: *If you were to do it all over again, what would you do differently, if anything?*

Broadly considered, Wings of Winter is a compendium of one man's very specific curiosity, except he's collating it for you. For us.

covered' by whites and then became a popular item? Is it possible that it became popular except for the wing, that it was traditionally made wingless? And in Buffalo, the story is, they're too pretty for the stockpot, so we decided to fry them up. So is it mutual discovery? Is that the actual origin, or is it that with our food ways, we didn't keep track of where things came from if it wasn't from white people? It's something I'm curious about. I've tried to do some research but I haven't found anything yet. After I start analyzing the [Wings of Winter] data, I might do more."

There is zero doubt in my mind that Hovland will dig until he finds something on the honest origins of chicken wings. It's merely another aspect of his thoroughness and intentionality.

Until then, data is what we have. Data fills spreadsheets. Spreadsheets become graphs. And people love graphs. They think they learn from them.

"Right now I just have the numbers," Hovland says. "It's just Instagram posts, pictures, some of the data points. I have all of the data points in the Google spreadsheet publicly available. The spreadsheet doesn't support the way I want to graph [bone] lengths right now, so I have to learn a software language to do that. But I'm going to do it. So I can, like, graph the length range per location."

"Wait. You're going to learn a software language to accommodate Wings of Winter?"

"Yeah. It's something I want to do," he says, 100 percent nonchalant.

Somehow, Hovland's spirit is always there, woven into Wings of Winter itself. Actually, that may be this open-sourced gift's greatest accomplishment. It feels hugely human.

In spite of all its decimal points. And the mountains of dead birds.

JDH: Besides more measurements, I think I'd try to get the people that made specific recommendations to accompany me to their recommended spot. I would have reveled in asking them why they enjoy their choice and trying to experience it through their lens.

CP: *Did this exploration provoke any big "eureka" moments (either scientific or personal) along the way? Big life realizations, facilitated by chicken wings?*

JDH: Nothing profoundly changing, but with as much humility as possible, it reminded me that I'm a really good cook. Before this I'd never cooked wings in any style, now I've followed recipes to make sticky wings and baked Buffalo wings, created my own dry rub, winged yakitori (pardon the pun), and took a wing style from one culture and applied the same principles to another with great success, in my humble opinion.

CP: *You'd mentioned looking forward to not knowing the answer to "What are you having for dinner?" So what was the first non-wing day spent eating?*

JDH: For lunch I had Skyway Wok: spicy beef noodles, cashew chicken, and an egg roll. That evening I was volunteering with Surly Gives a Damn in Golden Valley at the Food Group, and we met at Pub 42 afterwards for a beer. I'd had the wings there before, and they were good, but I opted for the smoked chicken quesadilla.

CP: *What's next, project-wise?*

JDH: Over the summer I'm going to do Salads of Summer, but no rules, no measurements—just taking pictures, figuring out what their color palette is, enjoying it.

CP: *You don't happen to have synesthesia, do you?*

JDH: I wish.

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Rabbit Hole's

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Lest you think sauces are for hiding imperfections, these babies hit buttons. Hovland didn't know he had. "Peanut but-

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This would have been a hot contest in the smoked-then-fried department if Terzo's (stellar) wings hadn't fallen off their bar menu. Alas! Luckily we still have Revival, which Hovland calls "a clinic in smoking and frying. Great tastes from the smoke and the [dry] rub, great texture from the frying of the rendered skin." *Two locations; revivalfriedchicken.com*

*(Though he'd like you to know that "favorites" change daily, and this list should not be considered definitive.)

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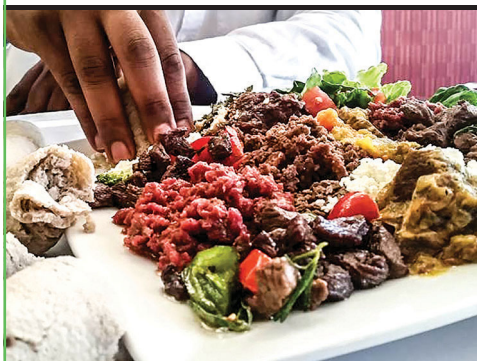


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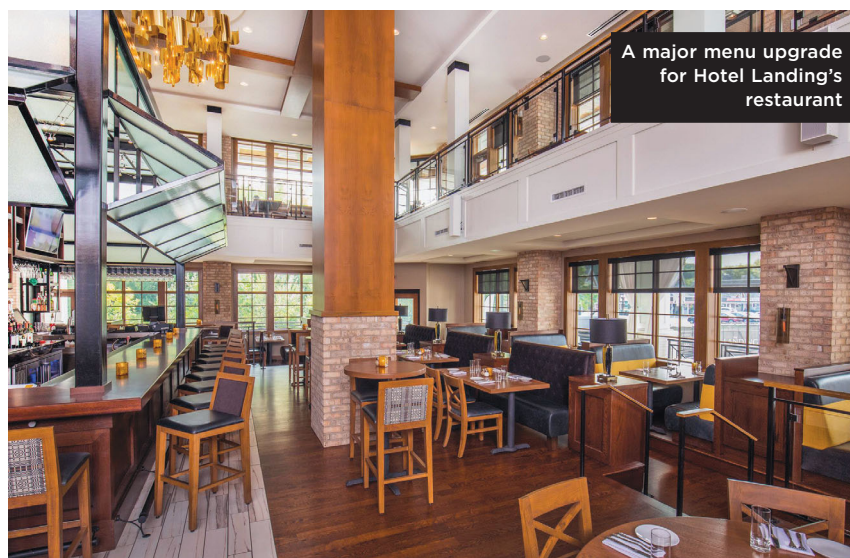
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CHEF LENNY RUSSO STEERS WAYZATA'S NINETWENTYFIVE TOWARD THE LAKE

When Hoboken-raised chef Lenny Russo told his friends back East that he was taking the helm of a Wayzata restaurant on Lake Minnetonka, nobody asked, "Where?"

"This might sound grandiose," Russo says, "But Italy has Lake Como. And we have Lake Minnetonka."

The comparison might not be so far-fetched. Just as aristocrats have flocked to the bucolic shores of Italy's third-largest lake since the Roman Empire, so have relaxation-seeking daytrippers decamped to Minnesota's ninth-largest and -deepest lake since Minnetonka's first tourism boom of the 1880s.

Last month, Russo took the reins as food and beverage director at ninetyfive, a farm-to-table restaurant at Hotel Landing, the first hotel to open in Wayzata in a century. With executive chef and Spoon and Stable alum Daniel Cataldo running the kitchen, Russo's focusing on revamping what was a huge menu into an experience that embraces the lake.

A James Beard Award-nominated chef perhaps best known for his years as chef-owner of St. Paul's Heartland Restaurant (RIP), Russo may be the first person to compare one of Minneapolis' tony Western suburbs to one of Italy's famed resorts. Yet a sneak peek at his ambitious new menu and redesign, which aims to embrace the historic lake resort location, suggests he might not be the last. (And, harkening to Russo's Italian roots, the signature vegetarian dish will be a sheep-milk ricotta agnolotti.)

Since his early days at two iconic Minneapolis restaurants, the Loring and

the New French Cafe, Russo has been inspired by, and committed to, sourcing ingredients from local farmers and purveyors—working relationships cultivated, in some cases, over several decades. At ninetyfive, he'll take that sustainable, regionally sourced ethos up a notch. Have you ever tasted fennel-cured Lake Superior whitefish, served in typical Danish style, with brown bread salad? (We're talking not just "house-made," but homemade: Cataldo's a crackerjack baker, Russo brags, who creates the loaves from his scratch sourdough starter.) Or what about bison tartare with rose hips, sumac, prickly ash, and quail egg?

The dishes represent what Russo calls "hyperlocal food," his current culinary passion. "These ingredients are indigenous,

NINETWENTYFIVE

at Hotel Landing
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not cultivated," he explains. That means lobster bisque is out, and freshwater fish chowder is in. The story of the menu, Russo says, is ultimately "a story about the lake."

As they roll out these new dishes, Russo and Cataldo are revising the restaurant's once massive menu, and refining the wine list to make it more food-focused. Expect the restaurant to go dark for nine days beginning April 30, when staff will hunker down to retrain, refresh, and ultimately relaunch on May 10. (Yes, that means fancy new resort-inspired uniforms, too.)

"People who come here want to experience the lake, want to experience Minnesota," Russo muses. "We're sitting on top of some of the best ingredients in the world. We don't need to reach very far." —SARAH CHANDLER

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BLINDS ('WOLVES' TOUR KICKOFF), 4TH CURTIS, AND DOUBLE GRAVE
MONDAY, APRIL 9

STUYEYED
W/ THE COAX, HARPER'S JAR
TUESDAY, APRIL 10

DURAND JONES & THE INDICATIONS
W/ SEABERG
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11

PENGUIN PRISON
W/ MATING RITUAL
THURSDAY, APRIL 12

UP NEXT TURF CLUB

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THE 4ONTHEFLOOR
W/ VANDOLIERS
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 4

BIRDS OF CHICAGO
W/ THEM COULEE BOYS
THURSDAY, APRIL 5

LO MOON
W/ KRAUS
FRIDAY, APRIL 6

ALBERT HAMMOND JR
W/ THE MARIAS
SATURDAY, APRIL 7

ERIKA WENNERSTROM (OF HEARTLESS BASTARDS)
W/ THE LAST BANDOLEROS, MARIE/LEPANTO
SUNDAY, APRIL 8

MISSIO
W/ MORGAN SAINT
MONDAY, APRIL 9

GEOGRAPHER
W/ JOAN
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11

ACID MOTHERS TEMPLE
W/ YOO DOO RIGHT, BLACK SATORI
THURSDAY, APRIL 12

UP NEXT OTHER VENUES

S. CAREY
W/ GORDI
THE CEDAR
SATURDAY, APRIL 7

BATHS
W/ NO JOY, SASAMI ASHWORTH
FINE LINE
SATURDAY, APRIL 7

TAUK
SHAPESHIFTER TOUR
W/ PHO
FINE LINE
THURSDAY, APRIL 12

WILD CHILD
EXPECTATIONS TOUR
W/ THE WILD REEDS
THE CEDAR
FRIDAY, APRIL 13

LOVETT OR LEAVE IT
STATE THEATRE
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THURSDAY, APRIL 19

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A LIST

FRIDAY BNW looks at the history of alcohol (it's epic) **P. 23**

SATURDAY Corgis race at Bald Man Brewing Company **P. 24**

Take a mind-bending trip into Robert Lepage's childhood memories.



ÉRIK LABBÉ

THEATER

ROBERT LEPAGE: 887

WALKER ART CENTER

Robert Lepage's leviathan set for the Metropolitan Opera's production of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* and his high-concept extravaganzas for Cirque du Soleil have garnered the French-Canadian director kudos—and some critical kvetching. In 887, co-presented by the Walker Art Center and the Guthrie Theater, memory lane becomes a cabinet of wonders, as Lepage presents a dreamlike remembrance of his boyhood home in Quebec City. Lepage, who wrote and directed this solo tour de force, relates a grid of interlocking tales around the things we can't quite remember and the things we can't forget. Employing a set composed of dollhouse-scale buildings and meticulously crafted miniatures, Lepage combines theatrical trompe l'oeil and high-tech scenic transformations to evoke the alchemy of personal and collective histories. 8 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday; 2 p.m. Saturday. \$20-\$45. 725 Vineland Place, Minneapolis; 612-375-7600.

Through Saturday —LINDA SHAPIRO

WEDNESDAY 4.4

COMEDY

CRASH & BURN VII

ACME COMEDY CO.

Four headliners. Seven shows. Make a new act or die trying. That's the official tagline for this week's event. The rules are fairly simple: The material performed has to be all new. Standups can work on those jokes throughout the week (or trash them entirely), but by Saturday the performers are expected to take the stage with no notes and a mostly polished set. The brainchild of Tim Slagle, *Crash & Burn* has become a must-see series for comedy fans who want a peek behind the curtain. This year's iteration features Slagle alongside Acme favorite Cy Amundson, plus veteran J. Elvis Weinstein and fast-rising headliner Carmen Lynch. While the potential for crashing and burning might seem high, the show has been

an unbridled success for the past six years, making it one of the most creative and fun weeks on the Acme comedy calendar. Will this episode seven be *Star Wars* good? Or like the seventh *Harry Potter* movie, where it's just a bunch of dying and boring shit in the woods? There's only one way to find out. 18+. 8 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday; 10:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday. \$15-\$18. 708 N. First St., Minneapolis; 612-338-6393.

Through Saturday —PATRICK STRAIT

DANCE/THEATER

FIVE POINTS

RITZ THEATER

Named after the infamously rough section of NYC where in the early 1800s gang allegiance was often equated with hereditary identity, *Five Points* follows the intersecting paths of two historic figures, an African American dancer popularly known as Master Juba and his equally renowned Irish American

counterpart, John Diamond. Lauded for astonishing displays of fleet-footed abandon, these two performers would be famously bound by a series of dance challenges that managed to, in their frenzied improvisation, create such original forms as tap. Local playwright Harrison David Rivers brings this history to life with the nuances of the period, while the New York-based team of Douglas Lyons and Ethan Pakchar amplify the drama with rhythmically propulsive songwriting. In directing this world-premiere production, Theater Latté Da artistic director Peter Rothstein oversees a charismatic cast headlined by Ben Bakken, Lamar Jefferson, and Dieter Bierbrauer. The show is in previews April 4-6. For tickets, go to www.latteda.org. 7:30 p.m. Wednesdays through Saturdays; 2 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. \$29-\$49. 345 13th Ave. NE, Minneapolis; 612-361-6960. **Through May 6 —BRAD RICHASON**

THURSDAY 4.5

BEER/BENEFIT

ALL ARE WELCOME BEER

LAKES & LEGENDS BREWING COMPANY

The folks behind the "All Are Welcome Here" sign campaign are teaming up with Lakes & Legends Brewing Company for a fundraiser benefiting the ACLU. At All Are Welcome Beer, organizers have arranged a lineup of local celebrities, politicians, and artists, such as Mayor Jacob Frey, Minneapolis City Council member Phillipe Cunningham, arts connoisseur Robyne Robinson, and local music journalist Andrea Swensson. Musical guests include John Munson, Jeremy Messersmith, Maria Isa, and Lazerbeak. Lakes & Legends will be unveiling a brand new beer for the occasion, and you will have a chance to get your photo taken by Brent Dundore, the photographer behind the They/Them project, currently on view at



CHRIS GARBORG

Lush. Of course the real reason to go is to support the ACLU's important work, but there will be plenty of entertainment and socializing opportunities. 5 to 10 p.m. Free. 1368 Lasalle Ave., Minneapolis; 612-999-6020. —SHEILA REGAN

COMEDY RIP MICHEALS

RICK BRONSON'S HOUSE OF COMEDY Rip Micheals hails from Chicago, and is probably most recognized as part of MTV's *Wild 'N Out* standup comedy series. Influenced by Bernie Mac and Katt Williams, Micheals has developed a style distinctly different from his heroes', interacting with audiences as he presents his set. "Don't cheat," he advises men in the crowd, "just be honest. It's better to be honest, because women are smarter than you." He claims he's been caught cheating in every conceivable way, and passes the wisdom of his experiences on. "Don't leave your phone around women," he cautions. "Take it wherever you go. I don't care if you're taking a shower, put it in a Ziploc bag and tie it to your nuts. Women will unlock your voicemail." They'll also test you. "Women will let you tell a bold-faced lie just to see what your lyin' face looks like, so they know." 16+. 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Friday; 9:45 p.m. Friday; 9:30 p.m. Saturday; 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. \$16. 408 E. Broadway, Mall of America, Bloomington; 952-858-8558. **Through Sunday** —P.F. WILSON

FRIDAY 4.6

ART/GALLERY

EMMETT RAMSTAD: LAYING IN WAIT

HAIR + NAILS
CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY

Participatory artwork—whether immersive dance/theater productions

that invite (aka require!) people to move from room to room while interacting with performers, or mixed-media installations in which viewers are challenged to calibrate their own experiences—haven't been this popular since the '60s and '70s. But today's practitioners are certainly engaging in some provocative explorations. One of them is Emmett Ramstad. His new piece asks participants to investigate periods of stasis, those moments in which we wait—whether with anticipation, dread, or boredom. In the waiting rooms he's created, we get to fish for items through a hole in the floor, experience a sense of distortion, and think about what really is happening in the bathroom. Think of it as the re-contextualization of the ordinary—meaning the results could be extraordinary. There will be an opening reception on Friday, April 6, from 6 to 10 p.m., and an artist's conversation Saturday, April 28, at 7 p.m. 2222 1/2 E. 35th St., Minneapolis. **Through May 11** —CAMILLE LEFÈVRE

THEATER

THE (ALMOST) COMPLETE AND (MOSTLY) ACCURATE HISTORY OF ALCOHOL

BRAVE NEW WORKSHOP ETC THEATRE

From the minds of the guys who brought you *A Very Die Hard Christmas* comes a new show about the cause of, and solution to, all of life's problems: alcohol. *The (Almost) Complete and (Mostly) Accurate History of Alcohol* tells the story of alcohol's impact on our culture, from the first Olympics all the way up to what a disaster the North Loop can become on a Thursday night. Josh Carson, the show's co-creator, says that this "hysterical historical" tells a lot of incredible drinking stories, but that one is greater than the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24 ►

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A-LIST

CONTINUED FROM FRIDAY ►

rest. "The greatest drinking story ever told is your own," he says. "When we were working on ideas for a new show, we realized that alcohol is one thing that nearly everyone has in common." With a cast full of BNW alumni, the production is likely to make you hurt from the inside, both from laughter and liver failure. 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays. \$20. 824 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis; 612-332-6620. **Through April 28** —PATRICK STRAIT

DANCE

ZORONGO FLAMENCO DANCE THEATRE

THE COWLES CENTER

Along with joyful exuberance, flamenco dance resounds with the drama of personal and political trauma. In this welcome remounting of Susana di Palma's 1996 work *Garden of Names*, Zorongo Flamenco teams up with Joe Chvala's Flying Foot Forum and an international team of artists led by the indomitable di Palma. *Garden of Names* revolves around Argentina's desaparecidos, or disappeared—the thousands of activists, students, journalists, and others kidnapped, tortured, and murdered during a period of state terrorism in the 1970s. Based on Lawrence Thornton's award-winning novel, *Imagining Argentina*, *Garden of Names* centers on the ability of artists to both embody pain and engender healing. This haunting spectacle includes a harsh and splendid solo, originally performed by di Palma to Holly Near's "Hay una Mujer Desaparecida," sung by Near and the iconic Ronnie Gilbert. A brilliant expression of anguish and fortitude, it will be performed here by Puerto Rican phenom Jeanne d'Arc Casas. 8 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays; 2 p.m. Sundays. \$30. 528 Hennepin Ave., Minneapolis; 612-206-3636.

Through April 15 —LINDA SHAPIRO

SATURDAY 4.7

BEER

11TH ANNUAL FIRKIN FEST

THE HAPPY GNOME

For beer aficionados, rare beer offerings can make for a destination happy hour. So the Happy Gnome's Firkin Fest, boasting over 60 one-of-a-kind varieties, is an annual pilgrimage for many. Upon entrance, revelers will be bestowed an event glass, which they will fill with samples from breweries both near and far. Local makers will include Steel Toe, Modist, and Lake Monster. Outstate reps such as Mankato Brewery, Milk

and Honey Cider (Cold Springs), and Castle Danger (Two Harbors) will be in attendance, and faraway beers will hail from California (Ballast Point), Colorado (Left Hand), and Ohio (Great Lakes). Find tickets at dojour.us. 21+. Noon to 4 p.m. \$50; free for designated drivers. 498 Selby Ave., St. Paul; 651-287-2018. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

THEATER

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER

GUTHRIE THEATER

When the film *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* was released in 1967, race relations seemed to be undergoing a profound change in the United States. Coinciding with the national abolishment



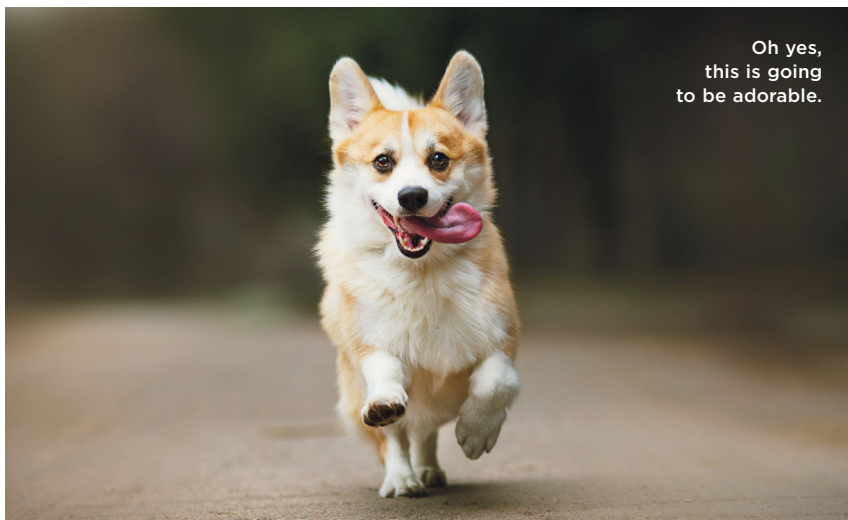
MATT HINTZ

ART/PARTY

UNICORN ART SHOW 4

ARTSPACE
 JACKSON FLATS

We're having a unicorn moment right now. In recent years, the magical creature has shown up on sparkly makeup products and pool inflatables, and was an inspiration for a drink at Starbucks. This weekend at Artspace Jackson Flats, unicorns will serve as a muse for local artists in the return of this whimsical exhibition and party. There will be pastel paintings, metal sculptures, and goth shrines festooned with gems. This year's event, which will feature over 100 artists, is open to all magical creatures, so while the art will remain unicorn-centric, there will also be odes to dragons, mermaids, and narwhals. Check out the art at Saturday's party, which will include cocktails, tarot readings, face painting, and eats from Gastrotruck. Come in costume, or come as you are (a sparkly freak, that is). 7 to 11 p.m. Free. 901 18 1/2 Ave. NE, Minneapolis; 612-333-9012. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER



Oh yes,
this is going
to be adorable.

LISA NAGORSKAYA

of anti-miscegenation laws, the film mirrored the cultural zeitgeist in its grounded storyline of a young white woman who shocks her supposedly enlightened parents by revealing that she is engaged to a black man. Rather than becoming an artifact of our nation's racially divided past, unfortunately, the challenges of *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* continue to pervade our culture, making this an ideal moment to revisit the piece via an acclaimed stage adaptation by playwright Todd Kreidler. Directed by Timothy Bond, the striking cast features Maeve Coleen Moynihan, JaBen Early, Sally Wingert, and David Manis. Show schedules vary, go to www.guthrietheater.com for complete times. 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays; 1 p.m. Saturdays starting April 21; 7 p.m. Sundays. \$29-\$77. 818 S. Second St., Minneapolis; 612-377-2224. **Through May 27 —BRAD RICHASON**

PARTY HAUNTED BASEMENT 2018 ANTI-GALA

SQUIRREL HAUS ARTS

The Haunted Basement has been freaking people out for over a decade. Once housed in the Soap Factory, they are now terrifying folks in their own space on Hennepin. But before they return for Halloween haunts, the organization must raise funds. This Saturday they'll be throwing an event at Squirrel Haus that is part rave, part dance party, and part art show. Blacklight and B-movies are the themes of the night; an art show will feature works celebrating both of these things. There will also be blacklight face painting, best utilized on the glow-in-the-dark dance floor. Add in snacks, refreshments, and tarot readings, and you have a spooky night. Those who go VIP will end their evening with a special midnight performance from Transvestite Soup's *MN Rocky Horror* cast. Find tickets at www.temptickets.com.

com. 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. \$15; \$40 VIP. 3450 Snelling Ave., Minneapolis; 612-669-8712. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

DOGS

RUNNING OF THE HALF PINTS

BALD MAN BREWING COMPANY

Most dogs are kind of goofy—that's why we love them, right?—but there's something especially ridiculous about the majestic corgi. They're short, a little stumpy, and generally happy. Which is why the Running of the Half Pints at Bald Man should be delightful. This dog festival will feature pups racing on a 120-foot track. If you have a corgi, be sure to bring them and sign them up. The cute name game is strong here; dogs with monikers like Bubble Butt, Wiggle Butt, Dewey, and Tedford Woofington are already registered. Vendors selling corgi and other doggy wares will add to festivities. Noon to 5 p.m. \$5. 2020 Silver Bell Rd., Eagan; 651-600-3164. —JESSICA ARMBRUSTER

BOOKS/PARTY

GAWN! A READING FROM GENTRYIFICATION

THE 1108 ARTISTS' COOPERATIVE AT JXTA

Local poet and graphic designer Chaun Webster drops his latest opus, *GeNtryification: or the scene of the crime*, this week in north Minneapolis. The book is a feast of words and images pondering race, geography, and memory. Webster's rumination on the theme of displacement, particularly in north Minneapolis, is done through images, text, and critical discourse. As Minneapolis faces gentrification issues, both the book and the reading will offer a lot to think about. For the release party, Webster is joined by performance artist/community organizer Lisa Marie Brimmer, with music from Dameun Strange and Kahlil Brewington. 7 p.m. Free. 1108 W. Broadway Ave. N., Minneapolis. —SHEILA REGAN

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WADE'S WORLD

Steven Spielberg's *Ready Player One* brings the OASIS to life



Tye Sheridan
as Wade

JAAP BUTTENDIJK

BY TONY LIBERA

Ready Player One is somewhat of an oddity: It's a movie you can go into with zero background knowledge and yet still get every reference. That's because Steven Spielberg's adaptation—like the 2011 Ernest Cline bestseller on which it's based—is loaded with pop-culture nods, in-jokes, and Easter eggs that make it feel more like a nostalgic art gallery than its own story. Somehow that's not a bad thing.

Set 20-some years in the future, *Ready Player One* offers a vision of the United States that's at once disturbing and technologically fascinating. Overpopulation, among other socio-economic problems, has forced Americans into dense and derelict living conditions. As escapism, people log onto the OASIS, an expansive virtual reality created by a man named James Halliday (Mark Rylance).

When Halliday died five years prior, an announcement went out that he'd hidden three keys somewhere inside his digital universe. Whoever finds the keys first will win Halliday's gigantic fortune and gain control of the OASIS.

Enter Wade Watts (Tye Sheridan), a young gunter (egg hunter) with an encyclopedic knowledge of Halliday. When Wade—as his online alter ego, Parzival—finds the first key, he draws the eye of Innovative Online Industries and its corporate baddy Nolan Sorrento (Ben Mendelsohn). Sorrento wants to win Halliday's game so he can sell ad space and monetize the OASIS. When Wade refuses to join up, he finds his life changed forever.

Fans of the book be warned: While the overarching structure and characters are there, the movie version of *Ready Player One* diverges quite a bit from the book. This may irk the diehards, but casual readers and total strangers will likely find the condensed and tweaked storyline to be more conducive to a silver screen telling. And Cline co-wrote the script, so purists can take solace in his involvement being at least some mark of authenticity.

From there, Spielberg and company have a lot of fun. This is a popcorn flick in its truest form: a simple hero's journey with tons of visual appeal and an inventive foundation. What's great about the world Cline has created is that for most, it's readily accessible (though some have

READY PLAYER ONE
directed by Steven Spielberg
area theaters, now open

argued the exact opposite about the book). You don't need any fantastic backstory or otherworldly exposition, because this is a logical extension of our reality, our culture. Having some basic knowledge of online gaming will help, but given the wealth of references, there's something for everybody. A scene centered on Kubrick's *The Shining* stands out as the best part of the movie.

If there's a knock against *Ready Player One*, it's that there's not a lot of narrative depth here. However, it's fun enough that it doesn't really matter. There are some statements it tries to make about corporate America and the role of pop culture, but for the most part Spielberg is just aiming for a good time. And the OASIS provides enough novelty to keep us in that mindset.

So while *Ready Player One* is fairly shallow (and at least 20 minutes too long), it's not the monotonous slog that other action-adventure blockbusters tend to be. And with its never-ending world of possibility, this looks to be only the beginning. **C**

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WOLVES IN THE JUNGLE

A teen soccer team scores enough goals for a win



WILLIAM CLARK

BY JAY GABLER

The Jungle Theater's new production, *The Wolves*, is named for a fictional girls' soccer team. Eavesdropping on their warm-ups for 90 minutes, you learn a lot about their lives, but what first strikes you is also what will stick with you long after the plot details have faded away: the show's finely measured tone, situating the tragicomic tumult of adolescence on a swath of artificial turf.

Sarah DeLappe's 2016 script is one of the hottest new plays in the country, and prior to Friday's performance, director Sarah Rasmussen took the stage to explain how she lobbied for the Jungle to be one of the first regional houses to produce *The Wolves*. When you see the show, you'll understand what all the buzz is about.

The Wolves are an indoor soccer team playing through the winter somewhere in "middle America" (at least, that's what the girls think their region is called). We see the players before games, and for most of the show we know them only by their uniform numbers. Their unseen coach is a sketchy inebriate, so leadership falls on the shoulders of the team captain, #25 (Shelby Rose Richardson).

The opening scene establishes the wide-ranging nature of the girls' concerns. While they sit in a circle, repeating ritualistic stretches, their discussion veers from genocide to pregnancy to school gossip. DeLappe's most subtle achievement here is to consistently get laughs, often hinging on the youths' naivete, without mocking her

THE WOLVES

Jungle Theater
2951 Lyndale Ave. S., Minneapolis
612-822-7063; through April 29

subjects. The humor comes from recognition: It builds, rather than burns, empathy.

Another bit of genius was realizing what a ripe dramatic setting a soccer field could be. In every scene, the tension of the upcoming game interacts with the joys and stresses of the girls' off-field lives. The Jungle's compact stage isn't an obvious choice for a play involving actual running and kicking, but Rasmussen and her cast infuse this dynamic production with real athleticism. The girls are played by a superb cast of young adult actors, although it will be fascinating to see how *The Wolves* plays when it ultimately makes its way to youth companies. Becca Hart brings gravity and petulance to the role of #7, a mercurial talent who's making some questionable decisions. Her opposite pole is Megan Burns as a smart but bashful new girl who's home-schooled in a yurt. This is a true ensemble piece, though, without a weak link in the cast.

The real weak link is DeLappe's over-reliance on heavily teased plot contrivances, which create dramatic momentum but lend the show a distracting element of artificiality. A trick that works better is keeping adult characters entirely offstage until "soccer mom" Jennifer Blagen enters near the show's conclusion, to deliver a pep talk that devastatingly subverts genre clichés. The same is true of the entire play; you'll kick yourself if you miss it. **C**

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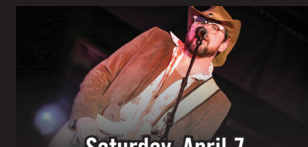
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STREET *Style*

CHILL Arctic Market: A Winter Pop-Up at Lakes & Legends Brewing on March 25. **BY ELLEN LAWSON**



OLIVIA KOSKI

21, STUDENT

What are you wearing?

Levi's jacket from Glebe Markets, Ralph Lauren booties, secondhand sweater, Express jeans and scarf.

Describe your style:

Really a mixture of everything.

What do you usually buy at makers markets?

I am typically drawn to pieces that are unique to wherever I am at the time. For example, in New Zealand I found a really neat necklace displaying NZ postage stamps.



BRITTANY TRAVIS

28, CO-OWNER AND FOUNDER OF B+D CUSTOM CRAFTS

What are you wearing?

Madewell Rivington sweater coat, Feminist T-Shirt from Redbubble, GAP jeans, Sperry Oxford-style flats.

Describe your style:

I'm a minimalist who loves classic, tailored pieces.

What do you usually buy at makers markets?

I typically look for modern accessories rather than clothing—minimalist-style leather, wool, or felt purses, simple stackable gold bracelets and rings.



RAE ENGLE

25, MARKETING MANAGER

What are you wearing?

Graphic sweater from Sheln, Paige jeans, Vans slip-ons, and Rebecca Minkoff cross-body.

Describe your style:

Simple with pops of fun.

What do you usually buy at makers markets?

Prints or jewelry.

Do you use any alternative shopping platforms?

I love using the LIKEtoKNOWit app.



HEIDI WOELFLE

25, CO-FOUNDER AND DESIGNER AT WAY THE LABEL

What are you wearing?

Vintage silk blouse, jumpsuit from WAY the Label, Chuck Taylors.

Describe your style:

Vintage and thrift store finds paired with new pieces.

What do you usually buy at makers markets?

Art prints and clothing.

What trends have you noticed lately?

Lavender and lilac-colored pieces.

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ANDREA CANTER

"THEY KILLED MY KING"

Composer Davu Seru's new work looks back on his uncle's vengeful response to the Martin Luther King assassination

BY BRITT ROBSON

On April 4, 1968, shortly after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, 27-year-old Clarence C. Underwood III announced that he would kill the first white man he saw. He was true to his word. As 25-year-old John Frank Murray climbed off a bus in the north Minneapolis projects on his way home from work, Underwood shot him three times in the head.

Growing up in those same projects, drummer-composer Davu Seru heard whispers about his great-uncle Clarence, whom he saw walking around the neighborhood during the 1980s.

This was remarkable—for a variety of reasons. After murdering Murray, Underwood

pointed his gun at the oncoming police and told them to shoot him because somebody had killed his King. They spared his life.

At his trial, Underwood claimed that he couldn't remember shooting Murray, but he was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 40 years in the Stillwater State Prison. He spent one year at St. Peter Mental Hospital and served six years in Stillwater before being released.

Most everyone wanted to leave it at that. The local papers covered the murder and trial, of course, but most people were preoccupied by the news of King's assassination and the rioting that erupted in dozens of cities across the country afterward. The Glenwood Civic League raised more than

\$1,000 to ensure that Murray's widow could return to the couple's hometown of LaCrosse, Wisconsin. Murray had moved to the projects as a show of support for the civil rights movement.

Davu Seru isn't shy about stating why he resurrected the Underwood-Murray drama as an 18-minute blues for chamber ensemble and woman's vocal, titled *Dead King Mother*, which will be performed at the Capri Theater in north Minneapolis on the 50th anniversary of King's assassination—and, of course, the Murray murder.

"I admit I am a sucker for the sensational—particularly tall tales of bad men and anti-heroes wreaking havoc on polite society," he wrote on his blog in late January. "And I know I'm not the only one."

But it goes deeper than that. In graduate school, Seru searched out the newspaper accounts on microfilm at the library to flesh out the family's oral history about the uncle who killed a white man. When I interviewed him in 2016 for a Star Tribune profile, he told me that when he initiated conversations with his family members more immediately affected by the tragedy, "it is still something they don't like to touch. It took their father away and left my aunt to raise them."

An accomplished musician and author, and a professor of literature at Metro State University, Seru is bilingually fluent in the often conflicting codes and underlying attitudes that demarcate black and white culture in America, particularly in the Twin Cities. When he refers to himself as a "celebrated local black" in the bio on his website, the sardonic irony is difficult to miss.

Tackling the racially charged, morally abrasive, and inescapably ambiguous resonance of this event was a personal challenge to Seru's artistry. He'd tinkered with fragments of *Dead King Mother* for a long time, even playing portions of it for an audience in France years ago. When he was named composer-in-residence at Studio Z, the St.

Paul space operated by the new-music group Zeitgeist, in

2017, he got serious about producing something to be performed in north Minneapolis on the 50th anniversary of the day King and Murray were killed.

If you had to label Seru's music, you'd say it was grounded in jazz improvisation and the blues, and the richness of *Dead King Mother* courses through both of those por-



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MUSIC

tals. The two workshopped performances of the piece at Studio Z in late February featured a septet plus a female vocalist. (The Capri Theater concert will add at least one other instrument.) Seru initially makes superb use of the textural variation of xylophone and bass clarinet, flute and tuba, piano and drum through some swirling passages reminiscent of Charles Mingus. But the highlights include an aching, searing blues solo by Omar Abdul Karim on flugelhorn that is an emotional centerpiece, and some dizzying, sophisticated interplay near the conclusion of the piece beneath Sarah Greer's exhortatory vocals in the role of Underwood's wife. It underscores the lacing of ambiguity, anguish, and anger.

After both Studio Z performances, and at a preliminary workshop of snippets of the piece in January at the venue, Seru solicited audience feedback. Relatives from both the Underwood and Murray families responded. At the Capri, among the people onstage guiding the discussion will be longtime black activist Spike Moss, who grew up with Clarence Underwood, and Seru's aunt Kelly Hill, Underwood's cousin. Seru also expects that more black people will be in the audience at the Capri than at Studio Z, which will "hopefully mean people won't be so quiet during the gospel and blues passages."

He isn't sure if his great-uncle Richie, Clarence Underwood's younger brother, will attend or not. He was with Clarence when news of King's murder was announced. After dropping his gun on the floor, Clarence told Richie that the revolution was here, and urged him to join him. Richie's father was the one who informed him that Clarence had killed Murray. According to Seru, he told Richie, "I wasn't the best father, but I never raised you to end somebody's life."

Seru also wants to "touch each audience member enough that they feel implicated." On his blog he noted that "Part of what makes this story worth repeating is the way that it points to matters that are broadly historical—as if to steal itself away from those who would own it."

Of course owning it is tricky business too. "If you are looking for easy outs and scapegoats, that's all built in to the race rituals in this society," Seru says. "There are all these racially charged cues, but I am looking for people to be more heroic and see their way out of that. If white people are coming to absolve themselves of guilt, they won't leave as better people."

Davu Seru's sense of ownership shines through every facet of *Dead King Mother*. As he intended. The coda to his blog post on the work simply states: "Everybody has their own blues to sing. But sometimes we're called to witness on behalf of others. That's my aim in *Dead King Mother*." 

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FREE WILL ASTROLOGY

>> By Rob Breznysy

♈ ARIES (March 21-April 19): Eighty-three-year-old author Harlan Ellison has had a long and successful career. In the course of publishing hundreds of literary works in seven different genres, he has won numerous awards. But when he was in his 30s, there was an interruption in the upward arc of his career. The film production company Walt Disney Studios hired him as a writer. During his first day on the job, Ray Disney overheard Ellison joking with a co-worker about using Disney characters in an animated pornographic movie. Ellison was fired on the spot. I am by no means predicting a comparable event in your life, Aries. On the contrary. By giving you this heads-up, I'm hoping you'll be scrupulous and adroit in how you act in the early stages of a new project--so scrupulous and adroit that you will sail on to the next stages.

♉ TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Are you an evolving Taurus or an unevolving Taurus? Are you an aspiring master of gradual, incremental progress or a complacent excuse-maker who secretly welcomes inertia? Will the theme of your next social media post be "The Smart Art of Compromise" or "The Stingy Glory of Stubbornness"? I'm hoping you will opt for the former rather than the latter in each of the three choices I just offered. Your behavior in the coming weeks will be pivotal in your long-term ability to animate your highest self and avoid lapsing into your mediocre self.

♊ GEMINI (May 21-June 20): If you fly in a passenger jet from New York to London, the trip usually takes more than six hours. But on January 8, 2015, a powerful jet stream surging across the North Atlantic reduced that time significantly. With the wind's extra push, several flights completed the trip in five hours and 20 minutes. I suspect you'll have comparable assistance in the course of your upcoming journeys and projects, Gemini. You'll feel like the wind is at your back.

♊ CANCER (June 21-July 22): Actor Keanu Reeves' career ascended to a higher level when he appeared as a lead character in the film *Speed*. It was the first time he had been a headline in a big-budget production. But he turned down an offer to reprise his starring role in the sequel, *Speed 2*. Instead he toured with his grunge band Dogstar and played the role of Hamlet in a production staged by a local theater company in Winnipeg, Manitoba. I admire him for being motivated more by love and passion than by fame and fortune. In my estimation, Cancerian, you face a choice that in some ways resembles Keanu's, but in other ways doesn't. You shouldn't automatically assume that what your ego craves is opposed to what your heart yearns for and your soul needs.

♊ LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): A Leo sculptor I know is working on a 40-foot-long statue of a lion. Another Leo friend borrowed \$30,000 to build a recording studio in her garage so she can pursue her quixotic dream of a music career. Of my other Leo acquaintances, one is writing a memoir of her time as a black-market orchid smuggler, another just did four sky dives in three days, and another embarked on a long-postponed pilgrimage to Slovenia, land of her ancestors. What about you? Are there any breathtaking challenges or smart gambles you're considering? I trust you can surf the same astrological wave.

♊ VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): How sexy is it possible for you to be? I'm referring to authentic soul-stirring sexiness, not the contrived, glitzy, counterfeit version. I'm alluding to the irresistible magnetism that wells up in you when you tap in to your core self and summon a reverent devotion to your life's mission. However sexy it is possible for you to be, Virgo, I suggest you unleash that magic in the coming weeks. It's the most reliable strategy for attracting the spiritual experiences and material resources and psychological support you need.

♊ LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): According to my analysis of the cosmic omens, your impact is rising. You're gaining influence. More people are tuning in to what you have to offer. And yet your stress levels also seem to be increasing. Why is that? Do you assume that having more power requires you to endure higher tension? Do you unconsciously believe that being more worried is the price of being more responsible? If so, banish that nonsense. The truth is this: The best way to manage your growing clout is to relax into it. The best way to express your growing clout is to relax into it.

♊ SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): The immediate future will challenge you to revisit several fundamental Scorpio struggles. For best results, welcome these seeming intrusions as blessings and opportunities, and follow these guidelines: 1. Your control over external circumstances will increase in direct proportion to your control over your inner demons. 2. Your ability to do what you want will thrive to the degree that you stop focusing on what you don't want. 3. Your skill at regulating and triumphing over chaos will be invincible if you're not engrossed in blaming others.

♊ SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): I'm about to say things that sound extraordinary. And it's possible that they are in fact a bit overblown. But even if that's the case, I trust that there is a core of truth in them. So rejoice in their oracular radiance. First, if you have been hoping for a miracle cure, the next four weeks will be a time when you're more likely than usual to find it or generate it. Second, if you have fantasized about getting help to address a seemingly irremediable problem, asking aggressively for that help now will lead to at least a partial fix. Third, if you have wondered whether you could ever retrieve a lost or missing part of your soul, the odds are more in your favor than they've been in a long time.

♊ CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): The French government defines books as an "essential good," along with water, bread, and electricity. Would you add anything to that list of life's basics? Companionship? Stories? Deep sleep? Pleasurable exercise and movement? Once you identify your "essential goods," I invite you to raise the level of reverence and care you give them. Take an oath to treat them as holy treasures. Boost your determination and ability to get all you need of their blessings. The coming weeks will be a favorable time to enhance your appreciation of the fundamentals you sometimes take for granted.

♊ AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Buckingham Palace is the home and office of the Queen of England. It has been the main royal residence since Queen Victoria took the throne in 1837. But in earlier times, the site served other purposes. The 17th-century English lawyer Clement Walker described the building occupying that land as a brothel, a hub of "debauchery." Before that the space was a mulberry garden where silkworms tuned mulberry leaves into raw material for silk fabrics. I see the potential for an almost equally dramatic transformation of a certain place in your life, Aquarius. Start dreaming and scheming about the possibilities.

♊ PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Poet Carolyn Forché is a role model for how to leave one's comfort zone. In her early career, she earned writing degrees at placid universities near her childhood home in the American Midwest. Her first book mined material about her family; its first poem is addressed to her grandmother. But then she relocated to El Salvador, where she served as a human rights advocate during that country's civil war. Later she lived and wrote in Lebanon at the height of its political strife. Her drive to expand her range of experience invigorated her poetry and widened her audience. Would you consider drawing inspiration from Forché in the coming weeks and months, Pisces? I don't necessarily recommend quite so dramatic a departure for you, but even a mild version will be well rewarded.

freewillastrology@freewillastrology.com
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CROSSWORD

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POPINJAYS

BY BRENDAN EMMETT QUIGLEY

Across

- 1 Oil collector's degs.
- 5 Go "bibbity de dop de doody do dee"
- 9 Door holders
- 14 It's all around you
- 15 Vehicle with a medallion
- 16 Glass piece?
- 17 Bad vibe from a women's clothing store?

- 56 Places to get a belt
- 58 Muslim pilgrim on an Indonesian island?
- 60 Avoid
- 61 Rapier-like weapon
- 62 Easter dye brand
- 63 Some apples
- 64 Have legs
- 65 Hankook product

- 31 "Just. Stop."
- 33 Knitter's stitch
- 34 Zero figure?: Abbr.
- 36 Che buddy
- 38 Dig (into)
- 40 Vote for
- 41 Ultrasound images
- 42 Jacob's son
- 43 The Loop trains
- 45 ____ Union
- 46 Milk provider
- 47 BYU Museum of Paleontology city
- 48 Cast list entries
- 51 Genesis brother
- 52 City near San Francisco
- 53 City near Ventura
- 54 Somewhat open
- 55 Josh Radnor/Rosie Perez TV show
- 57 Words about an ancient hero
- 59 Right on the money

Down

- 1 ____ California peninsula
- 2 Japan's highest peak
- 3 In need of water
- 4 Reds pitcher Romano
- 5 Visit
- 6 Procter & Gamble soap
- 7 Lutz alternative
- 8 Oldest daughter on "Bob's Burgers"
- 9 Place for a hard hat
- 10 Knuckle-dragger
- 11 Really huge star of the Texans?
- 12 Stomach settler, briefly
- 13 Bedsheet material
- 18 Pick up
- 22 Make holy
- 24 "Come at me, ____"
- 26 Deadlift muscle, for short
- 27 Soak (up)
- 28 Vehicle in a pit
- 29 Tune played on an Egyptian radio station?
- 30 The things right in front of me

Last Week's Answer

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7pm : kfai house party presents

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9:30pm : ian alexy and the deserters

thu : april 5

9:30pm : midlife

fri : april 6

7pm : laura and sean's

movie and music trivia

10pm : the dang ol' tri'ole

nathan scott phillips band

tulips on an organ

sat : april 7

7pm : trivia mafia presents

331 drinkin' spelling bee

10pm : hayden fox (ep release)

lavender daughter, ayy cee

sun : april 8

2-4pm : dr. sketchy's anti-art school

8pm : trivia mafia

mon : april 9

8pm : the roe family singers

10pm : doug otto and friends

tue : april 10

7-9pm : t.e.e. - tuesday, early evening.

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SAVAGE LOVE

Quick and Dirty

Leftover queries from Savage Love Live at the Royal Oak Music Theatre

I visited Royal Oak, Michigan, for Savage Love Live at the Royal Oak Music Theatre. I didn't get to all of the questions submitted by the large and tipsy crowd, so I'm going to race through as many as I can in this week's column. Here we go...

Is there a way of breaking my cycle of being totally sexual and into someone for the first six months and then shutting down to the point that I don't want to be sexual with them at all? What's wrong with me?

Breaking a long-established pattern may require the aid of a therapist. But it's also possible this is the way your libido works; you could be wired for a lifetime of loving, short-term relationships. While our culture reserves its praise for successful long-term relationships, a short-term relationship can be a success. Everyone get out alive? No one traumatized? Were you able to pivot to friendship? Then you can regard that relationship as a success—or all those relationships as successes.

Cis, female, 33, poly, bi. I bruise easily, am into BDSM, and love to swim in my condo's shared pool, where there are many seniors. Any advice for hiding bruises or getting over the embarrassment?

Don't assume the senior citizens in the pool are so naive and/or easily shocked. Someone who became a senior citizen today—who just turned 65 years old—was 35 in 1988. I happen to know for a fact that people were doing BDSM way, way back in 1988.

My husband is a sweet guy who is very good to me. But he is also a gun-toting right-wing conservative, and these days that feels like an insurmountable difference. We have been together for seven years and married for two. No kids yet. I love him—and the thought of leaving him is terrifying—but I honestly don't know if this is going to work.

If you're afraid to leave him because of those guns, you need to get out. If you're afraid to leave him because you love him

and couldn't live without him, you might be able to stay. Maybe if you make “no political discussions about anything, ever” a condition of remaining in the marriage.

I'm a 21-year-old, queer, poly, cis girl who recently got into this whole thing with a co-worker at my shitty fast-food job. Long story short, we were having a rad time fucking around in the freezer... until he bashed International Women's Day on Facebook. I stopped getting him off by the frozen meat without an explanation, and I quit my job to go bind books instead. Is it too late to reach out and tell this dude that I dumped him because of his misogynistic online life? And how bitchy can I be?

The world would be a better place if (1) women refused to sleep with right-wing assholes (to say nothing of marrying them) and (2) women told right-wing assholes that right-wing assholery is the ultimate cock-block. So it's not too late, and you should be as bitchy as you can be.



Dan Savage

Why does my girlfriend enjoy anal sex more than I thought she would?

Because she does. Because anal is hot. Because the clit is a great big organ and most of it's inside the body and anal penetration may stimulate it in a way that's new and different and highly pleasurable and—hey, wait a minute. You aren't disappointed she's enjoying anal more than you thought she would, are you?

Donald Trump has been impeached, and you get to decide the punishment. So what sex toy gets used on him and who gets to use it?

Trump doesn't deserve a sex toy. Sex toys are for good boys and girls. All Trump deserves is a lump of the coal he loves so much shoved far enough up his ass to serve as a gag.

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